United Nations A/AC.109/2018/3

General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 March 2018

Original: English

Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Bermuda

Working paper prepared by the Secretariat

Contents

		Page
	The Territory at a glance	3
I.	Constitutional, legal and political issues	4
II.	Budget	5
III.	Economic conditions	5
	A. General	5
	B. Financial services	5
	C. Tourism	7
	D. Construction	7
	E. Transport and communications	7
IV.	Social conditions	8
	A. General	8
	B. Labour	8
	C. Education	9
	D. Public health	9

Note: The information contained in the present working paper has been derived from public sources, including those of the territorial Government, and from information transmitted to the Secretary-General by the administering Power under Article 73 *e* of the Charter of the United Nations. Information was transmitted by the administering Power on 15 December 2017. Further details are contained in previous working papers, available from www.un.org/en/decolonization/workingpapers.shtml.

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E. Crime and public safety 10
F. Human rights and related issues 10
V. Environment 11
VI. Military issues 12
VII. Relations with international organizations and partners 13
VIII. Future status of the Territory 13
A. Position of the territorial Government 13
B. Position of the administering Power 14
IX. Action taken by the General Assembly 14
Annex
Map of Bermuda 17

The Territory at a glance

Territory: Bermuda is a Non-Self-Governing Territory, as defined under the Charter of the United Nations, administered by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Representative of administering Power: Governor John Rankin (December 2016)

Geography: Bermuda is located in the western part of the Atlantic Ocean, approximately 917 km east of the North Carolina coast of the United States of America. It consists of 8 major and 130 smaller islands.

Land area: 53.35 km²

Exclusive economic zone: 450,370 km²

Population: 61,658 (2017 projection)

Life expectancy at birth: 81.5 years (men: 77.7 years; women: 85.1 years (2017 projection))

Ethnic composition: Approximately 54 per cent black, 31 per cent white and 15 per cent mixed and other races (2010)

Language: English

Capital: Hamilton

Head of territorial Government: Premier David Burt

Main political parties: Progressive Labour Party; One Bermuda Alliance

Elections: Most recent: 18 July 2017; next: due to be held by July 2022

Legislature: Bicameral legislature, comprising an 11-member Senate appointed by the Governor (3 at his or her discretion, 5 on the advice of the Premier, 3 on the advice of the leader of the Opposition) and the 36-member House of Assembly, elected in 36 constituencies for up to a five-year term.

Gross domestic product per capita: $99,316 (2016)

Economy: Financial services, tourism

Main trading partners: United States, Canada, United Kingdom and States members of the Caribbean Community

Unemployment rate: 7 per cent (2017)

Monetary unit: Bermuda dollar, pegged at parity with the United States dollar

Brief history: Bermuda was discovered in 1505 by the Spanish explorer Juan de Bermudez, and by 1510, it was referred to as "La Bermuda". It remained uninhabited until 1609, when British settlers on their way to Virginia were shipwrecked on one of its reefs. In 1612, King James I extended the charter of the Virginia Company to include Bermuda. After the Company's charter was annulled in 1684, government passed to the British Crown.

I. Constitutional, legal and political issues

1. The 1968 Constitution of Bermuda has been amended on five occasions, with the most recent revision being in 2003. According to the administering Power, the Constitution gives the Territory almost full internal self-government, leaving the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with a minimum number of constitutional controls. The Governor (and Commander-in-Chief), appointed by the British Crown, is responsible for defence, external affairs, internal security and the police.

2. The Territory has a parliamentary system of government, comprising a governor, a deputy governor, a cabinet and a bicameral legislature. The Governor appoints as Premier the member of the House of Assembly who appears to be best able to command the confidence of a majority of the 36 members of the House, each of whom represents a parliamentary constituency. The Premier heads a cabinet that consists of the Premier and not less than six other Ministers.

3. The law and legal system of Bermuda are based on the application of English common law and the principles of equity, the legislation of the United Kingdom (in force since 1612) that has been extended to Bermuda and acts of the Bermuda Parliament. The judiciary is appointed on the advice of the Chief Justice. There are three courts: the Magistrates' Court, the Supreme Court and the Court of Appeal. The British Overseas Territories Act 2002 provides for the conferral of British citizenship on citizens of British overseas territories.

4. Voters in the general elections or referendums must be 18 years of age and Bermudian by birth or status or non-Bermudian electors on the register as at 1 May 1976. The general elections were held in the Territory to elect 36 members to the House of Assembly on 18 July 2017, and the Progressive Labour Party won 24 seats. David Burt of the Progressive Labour Party took office as Premier the next day, succeeding Michael Dunkley of One Bermuda Alliance, who had been the Premier since 20 May 2014. At the age of 38, Mr. Burt became the youngest Premier of Bermuda.

5. In 1995, a referendum was held on the question of independence. Of the 58.8 per cent of eligible voters who participated, a small number by Bermudian standards according to the administering Power, 73.6 per cent voted against independence. The then-opposition party, the Progressive Labour Party, had organized a boycott of the referendum among supporters of independence, arguing that the issue should be resolved by general election.

6. In its 2005 report, the Bermuda Independence Commission noted that the racial question had been an ever-present feature of the social, economic and political landscape of Bermuda throughout its history. Racial divisions in Bermuda have, in significant measure, played out in support for, or in opposition to, independence and the method to be used to ascertain the wishes of the population. The Progressive Labour Party, which was the ruling party in 2005, wanted the issue of independence to be settled in the context of an election. The Progressive Labour Party reportedly remains publicly committed to pursuing a policy of disengagement from the United Kingdom. On the other hand, the United Bermuda Party, a forerunner of One Bermuda Alliance, favoured a referendum. The Commission concluded that it was incumbent upon both political parties to share the merits of each method.

7. In an interview on 14 September 2017, the Premier stated that, while the achievement of independence was in the constitution of his party, the territorial

Government was not committed to pursuing independence at that moment, as it was committed to growing the economy and addressing the immediate challenges inside the Territory.

II. Budget

8. The fiscal year of the Territory begins in April. According to the 2018/19 budget statement of the territorial Government, delivered on 16 February 2018, for that fiscal year, the revenue is estimated at $1.09 billion and the overall expenditure at $1.18 billion. Furthermore, in the 2017/18 budget year, the territorial Government is forecasted to earn $1.04 billion in revenue ($1.9 million more than the original estimate), with projected government operating expenses of $921.5 million, revised capital expenditure of $60.4 million and debt service costs of $4.5 million, all of which are lower than the original estimates. The revised estimate of the overall deficit is $119.2 million, which is $62.8 million less than the actual 2016/17 deficit, a decrease of 35 per cent.

III. Economic conditions

A. General

9. The economy of Bermuda is based primarily on the provision of financial services for international businesses and on tourism. According to the administering Power, the industrial sector is small and agriculture is limited, since only about 20 per cent of the land is arable.

10. According to the publication by the Ministry of Finance entitled "National economic report of Bermuda, 2017", issued in February 2018, in 2016, the economy of the Territory grew by 3.4 per cent in current market prices from 2015, marking the fourth consecutive year of growth in nominal terms after four years of decline. Nominal gross domestic product (GDP) was approximately $6.13 billion, reflecting an increase of $204.3 million from the 2015 revised figure of roughly $5.9 billion. As a result, GDP per capita rose to $99,316 in 2016, from $95,943 in 2015. When adjusted for inflation, however, real GDP in 2016 declined by 0.1 per cent. In 2016, of the 15 industries in Bermuda, all but 2 (manufacturing and public administration) recorded growth in value added. According to the administering Power, the highest growth rate, of 14 per cent (an increase from $126.4 million to $144.2 million), was marked in the industry of community, social and personal services, as a result of recreational, cultural and sporting activities related to the hosting of the thirty-fifth America's Cup in 2017.

11. According to the administering Power, the territorial Government is continuing its two-track strategy to improve the economy while simultaneously reigning in government expenditure and public debt.

B. Financial services

12. According to the administering Power, Bermuda is one of the world's leading international financial and business centres; the sector accounts for about 27 per cent of its GDP. Bermuda is also one of the major jurisdictions worldwide in the fields of large-scale insurance and reinsurance.

13. The Bermuda Monetary Authority, the integrated regulator of the financial services sector, has the power to levy civil fines. The Territory has no central bank. The peg to the United States dollar is managed by commercial banks meeting supply and demand at a one-to-one rate. The banks, rather than the Authority, own the foreign exchange reserves of Bermuda.

14. According to information provided by the administering Power, in the first six months of 2017, 362 new international companies and partnerships were registered in Bermuda, representing a 9.3 per cent decrease from the 399 registered in 2016. In addition, Bermuda registered a total of 23 new insurers and no new intermediaries during the same period in 2017.

15. According to the administering Power, Bermuda has never been a jurisdiction with bank secrecy laws and has maintained a private beneficial ownership register since the 1940s. The existing register contains the details of the ultimate owners of the private corporate entities operating in Bermuda. It is a central register held by a public authority and, as ownership changes over time, it is updated using an active automatic system. Under the regulatory legislation, there are provisions for financial institutions regarding controlling shareholders that require the approval of such persons by the Bermuda Monetary Authority.

16. For more than 70 years, Bermuda has required persons wishing to incorporate a company there to provide information on the ultimate beneficial owner. Currently, such persons are vetted by the Authority (subject to a 10 per cent controller threshold). Transfers of shares to non-Bermudians are also subject to vetting by the Authority. The Authority retains all of the information on the ultimate beneficial owner, which is provided to the Authority as part of the vetting process.

17. The Government exchanges the information with the competent authorities of the United Kingdom and of the United States of America, with which it has entered into international agreements. In April 2016, Bermuda concluded a bilateral arrangement with the United Kingdom on the reciprocal exchange of beneficial ownership information to allow law enforcement authorities to have timely access to beneficial ownership information on corporate and legal entities incorporated in the respective jurisdictions.

18. In the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, held in London on 28 and 29 November 2017, the overseas territories and the United Kingdom welcomed the progress made by the overseas territories with financial centres in implementing the arrangements set out in the exchange of notes on law enforcement exchange of beneficial ownership information, including establishing new and secure systems for the collection, exchange and use of beneficial ownership data, where they did not already exist. The Joint Ministerial Council committed itself to reviewing the effectiveness of the arrangements six months prior to their implementation deadline. It welcomed the cooperation of the overseas territories in international efforts to promote tax transparency and tackle financial crime and the constructive engagement of the overseas territories with the Code of Conduct Group (Business Taxation) of the European Union and at the first meeting of the Global Forum on Asset Recovery. The Joint Ministerial Council reiterated its commitment to showing leadership in tackling corruption and committed itself to prioritizing further work to enable the timely extension to the territories of the application of the United Nations Convention against Corruption, in particular when territories have requested such an extension, and to set a clear path for that process, building on the meeting held during the seventh session of the Conference of the States Parties to the Convention, held in Vienna from 6 to 10 November 2017.

19. In September 2013, Bermuda joined the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) to facilitate cooperation between jurisdictions in the assessment and collection of taxes, in particular to combat tax avoidance and evasion. The Convention came into force on 1 March 2014. According to the information provided by the administering Power, at the end of 2016, Bermuda had 106 tax information exchange multilateral agreement partners through its participation in the Convention with the Group of 20 countries, members of OECD and all States members of the European Union and other countries.

C. Tourism

20. Government statistics indicated that, in 2016, 646,465 travellers visited Bermuda (up from 600,316 in 2015), spending a total of $358.4 million (up from $304.3 million in 2015). Tourism accounted for $228 million, or 22.8 per cent, of the total government revenue in 2016. According to the administering Power, tourism directly accounted for 4.7 per cent of GDP. During the same year, 7.8 per cent of the workforce of the Territory was directly or indirectly employed in tourism, generating 2,611 jobs, an increase from 2,510 in 2015. With regard to visitors, in 2016, there were 397,904 cruise passengers (up from 377,522 in 2015) and 244,491 air visitors (up from 219,814 in 2015).

21. The official statistics of the territorial Government indicated that, by the third quarter of 2017, approximately 565,000 visitors had come to Bermuda, including approximately 350,600 cruise passengers.

22. According to the administering Power, the budget allocated to the Ministry of Tourism, Transport and Municipalities for 2017/18 was $39.5 million, of which $25 million was granted to the Bermuda Tourism Authority. In addition, the hotel and restaurant sector contributed 4.3 per cent of GDP in constant market prices in 2016, compared with 4.1 per cent in 2015.

D. Construction

23. In 2016, the construction and quarrying sector grew by 10.7 per cent from the previous year, to $211.0 million. Value added by that sector rose by 8.3 per cent in 2016, which was attributed primarily to the continued construction activities associated with the thirty-fifth America's Cup and renovation work at one of the largest hotels in the Territory. According to the administering Power, 35 per cent of the work performed was on residential properties, of which 68 per cent was undertaken by the private sector and 32 per cent by the public sector. Several hotel developments were ongoing and the new airport terminal broke ground in 2017.

E. Transport and communications

24. With a network of some 200 km of paved public roads and 400 km of private roads, Bermuda has a high road traffic density, with approximately 79 vehicles per km in 2016. Restrictions on car ownership to one per household, coupled with a policy of allowing no rental cars, have resulted in the development of a public transportation system of buses and ferries. According to the administering Power, Bermuda is in the process of amending its legislation (Motor Car Act 1951) to allow the rental of mini

cars for the first time. In 2016, a total of 47,387 road vehicles were registered, an increase for the second year in a row; 2015 had marked the first increase in six years.

25. Regular commercial flights connect Bermuda to a number of destinations in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Bermuda has its own air and ship regulatory agencies, with registries maintained by the Civil Aviation Authority and the Bermuda Shipping and Maritime Authority.

26. According to the report entitled "State of information and communications technology in Bermuda 2016", published by the territorial Government, in 2016, 83 per cent of households owned landline phones (compared with 87 per cent in 2014/15), mobile telephone ownership was at 89 per cent (up from 86 per cent in 2014/15), and 92 per cent of households and 100 per cent of businesses had access to the Internet.

IV. Social conditions

A. General

27. According to the 2018/19 budget statement, the Ministry of Education and Workforce Development is to be allocated a budget of $140.5 million, equivalent to 11.9 per cent of the total government expenditure estimated for 2018/19 and an increase of $5.8 million, in order to cover expenditure for additional workforce training and the development and enhancement of educational programmes.

B. Labour

28. Preliminary data from the 2017 employment survey by the territorial Government indicate that the total number of jobs in Bermuda increased slightly, from 33,481 in 2016 to 33,521 in 2017, while the number of jobs peaked in 2008, at 40,213. With regard to the employment data in 2016, according to the administering Power, the number of Bermudian job holders increased by 0.4 per cent, from 23,494 in 2016 to 23,578 in 2017. The official unemployment rate has remained at 7 per cent since 2015.

29. According to the administering Power, the Department of Workforce Development of the Ministry of Education and Workforce Development plans to launch a national strategic workforce development plan in 2018, which will replace part 2 of the national training plan that was originally developed to devise strategies to improve the economy and generate new jobs.

30. The Bermuda Job Board, an online national employment database operated by the Department of Workforce Development since November 2013, is available to Bermudians who are seeking employment, with the main objective of consolidating and centralizing the jobs available in Bermuda so as to help to connect workers and employers, allow more opportunities for qualified Bermudians to find employment and ultimately reduce the need for work permit applications. According to the administering Power, as at 1 December 2017, 1,816 employers and 11,540 candidates were registered on the Job Board.

31. The Law Reform Committee, established by the Minister of Home Affairs and tasked to review, update and improve the legislative framework for labour, continued

its work on the consolidation of labour laws. According to the administering Power, draft legislation is expected to be presented during the 2018 legislative session.

C. Education

32. The 2018/19 budget statement indicated that, for that fiscal year, about $114 million was provided to the Department of Education to support its overall objective of providing strategic leadership, supervision and policy direction for the delivery of a high-quality educational curriculum.

33. Education in Bermuda is compulsory, and it is free in public schools for all children from 5 to 18 years of age. There are 10 preschools, 18 primary schools, 5 middle schools, 1 special-needs school and 2 senior secondary schools in the public school system, which, according to the administering Power, had a student population of 4,945 in September 2017. There are a number of private schools, including six offering early primary education, serving some 40 per cent of the pupils of compulsory school age. Those institutions receive no government funding. The total school enrolment in 2017, which included public and private schools and Bermuda College, was 9,318.

34. Students from overseas territories benefit from the home student rate for school fees at British universities, provided that they have lived in a British overseas territory, the European Economic Area or Switzerland for the three years prior to the first academic year of their course of study. In addition, those students have access to funding provided by the European Union for higher or vocational education.

D. Public health

35. According to the 2018/19 budget statement, the budget allocated to the Ministry of Health was $190 million (16.1 per cent of the total estimated government expenditure), an increase from its budget for 2017/18 of $162.7 million representing 14.6 per cent of the total government expenditure, according to the information provided by the administering Power. In addition to regulation, the Ministry provides policy direction for the health sector. It also provides public health services, services for older persons and persons with disabilities, an acute care hospital, a psychiatric hospital, affordable health insurance plans and regulatory bodies for health professionals and health insurance. The Territory has a hybrid health financing system consisting of direct public funding and social health insurance, supported by government subsidies.

36. Bermuda has an ageing population and a low fertility rate. According to the statistics provided by the administering Power, 18 per cent of the population was expected to be 65 years or older in 2017, compared with 12 per cent in 2007. In 2016, the total fertility rate was 1.5 births per woman, which is below the replacement level of 2.1 births per woman. According to the administering Power, in 2017, life expectancy at birth was projected at 81.5 years, with men at 77.7 years and women at 85.1 years. Life expectancy is reported as being four years greater for the white population than for the remainder of the population.

E. Crime and public safety

37. The Ministry of National Security holds administrative responsibility for the Royal Bermuda Regiment, the Bermuda Police Service, the Bermuda Fire and Rescue Service, Border Control and the Department for National Drug Control. The Ministry works to ensure that the agencies and departments under its authority work in tandem to promote all aspects of safety in Bermuda.

38. The Bermuda Police Service remains committed to ensuring public safety through strong enforcement, community engagement and rigorous investigations leading to convictions. The Service continues to focus on five operational policing priorities, namely to: (a) enhance public confidence; (b) provide highly visible front-line policing; (c) respond quickly to emergencies; (d) conduct timely, quality-focused investigations; and (e) protect vulnerable people. The inter-agency gang task force continues to provide programmes aimed at intercepting and curbing gang-related crime.

39. In 2017, the United Kingdom continued to provide funding for a law enforcement adviser based in Miami, United States, who coordinated, managed and facilitated training and the provision of strategic advice in order to introduce new techniques and skills to the Territory's law enforcement agencies. Furthermore, RFA *Mounts Bay* has been stationed in the Caribbean since January 2017, as part of the North Atlantic patrol tasking of the Royal Navy, ensuring a year-round maritime presence of the United Kingdom and providing humanitarian assistance, disaster relief and crisis communications support in the region. The ship also worked with other regional navies and coast guards to combat illegal activities on the high seas. RFA *Mounts Bay* and HMS *Ocean* provided vital humanitarian relief to the region, in particular to the three Territories — Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands and the Turks and Caicos Islands — affected by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria, in September.

F. Human rights and related issues

40. Core international and European human rights instruments are applied in Bermuda, including the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. According to the administering Power, the ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by the United Kingdom was formally extended to Bermuda in March 2017, with two reservations relating to articles 1 and 15 (4) of the Convention. The territorial Government indicated in February 2017 that the first reservation was to preserve the position whereby Bermuda could continue to conscript only male recruits to the Royal Bermuda Regiment and that religious organizations would not be compelled to have women priests. The second reservation took account of the constitutional and immigration provisions that had the effect of discriminating against a Bermudian woman married to a non-Bermudian man, owing to the lesser rights granted to a non-Bermudian man married to a Bermudian woman compared with a non-Bermudian woman married to a Bermudian man.

41. The Human Rights Commission of Bermuda was established in 1982 to administer the 1981 Human Rights Act. According to the territorial Government, the

three main aspects of the work of the Commission pertain to providing effective and timely means for resolving individual complaints involving human rights, sexual harassment and disability, promoting knowledge of human rights in Bermuda and encouraging people to follow principles of equality, and helping to reduce barriers to equality in employment and access to services.

42. At the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories discussed their shared resolve to continue to promote respect for human rights and compliance with international obligations in the territories. In the communiqué adopted at that meeting, they welcomed the constructive engagement of the territories in the preparations for the universal periodic review process of the Human Rights Council in that regard. The leaders of the overseas territories also reaffirmed their commitment to ensuring the highest possible standards for the protection of children and promotion of children's welfare in the territories. At the meeting, the United Kingdom and the overseas territories discussed progress made in promoting inter-agency cooperation in the territories and the development of national response plans to define policy priorities, noted the particular challenges for those territories affected by the recent hurricanes and agreed that children's welfare should remain a central priority for recovery plans, including through the reconstruction of schools. In addition, they welcomed progress made under a memorandum of understanding to promote more effective collaboration between the overseas territories for the safeguarding of children.

V. Environment

43. According to the administering Power, the Ministry of the Environment was disbanded in July 2017 and its functions were spread across the Department of Parks of the Ministry of Public Works and the Departments of Planning and of Environment and Natural Resources of the Ministry of Home Affairs. There has been no reduction of funding or resources as a result of the redeployment. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources was made responsible for supporting the local agriculture and fishing industries, marine heritage, pollution control, water rights management, the management of terrestrial nature reserves, the conservation of endangered species, domestic animal control, the control of invasive pests and the operation of the Bermuda Aquarium, Museum and Zoo.

44. According to the administering Power, the Ministry of Home Affairs has prioritized the advancement and expansion of the Sargasso Sea Commission, established pursuant to the Hamilton Declaration on Collaboration for the Conservation of the Sargasso Sea, to better manage the wider Sargasso Sea, which is recognized in the Declaration as an important open ocean ecosystem. The Minister of Environment of Bermuda chaired the third joint meeting of the Commission and the signatories to the Hamilton Declaration, held in Azores, Portugal, on 18 and 19 April 2017.

45. Bermuda continues its efforts to ensure the sustainable management of its fisheries and improve its food security. According to the administering Power, observations by fishermen and government officials indicated that fish were aggregating to spawn earlier in the year, likely owing to increased water temperatures. Furthermore, a national crop strategy was completed to guide the island's efforts to increase local food production.

46. About 98 per cent of the electric power in the Territory is provided by a single private entity, which relies exclusively on fossil fuels to generate electricity. The remaining 2 per cent of electric power is provided by the Tynes Bay waste-to-energy plant, which is owned and operated by the Ministry of Public Works.

47. According to the administering Power, the amendments made in December 2017 to the Bermuda National Parks Act 1986 created 16 new protected areas (90 acres) of the national parks system. With the reclassification of seven existing parks as nature reserves, the total number of areas protected under the national park system stood at 112 (total area of 1,129 acres).

48. In the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the Governments of the United Kingdom and the overseas territories recognized that the destruction wrought by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria had served as a reminder of the vulnerability of the overseas territories to climate change-related events and the devastating effect that they could have on the lives and livelihoods of those who lived there. They committed themselves to continuing the practice of mutual engagement ahead of international forums on climate change to ensure that the views and priorities of the overseas territories were fully reflected in negotiations. It was agreed that a representative from the territories would attend the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Katowice, Poland, from 3 to 14 December 2018, as part of the delegation of the United Kingdom, highlighting the value of their presence in helping to amplify the shared message of the need for a high degree of ambition on climate change-related targets. The United Kingdom reiterated its commitment to working with the overseas territories on the issue of extending the application of treaties concerning climate change to the territories, including taking forward the work to extend its ratification of the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol to those territories that had indicated their readiness for it, through initial consultation with territories that had an interest in participating in meetings concerning the Paris Agreement to be held in the first half of 2018. The importance of work in the territories on climate change adaptation and mitigation and collaboration between the territories to share best practices on environmental management and climate change issues, including through the annual meetings of ministers of the environment of the territories, was emphasized.

VI. Military issues

49. Bermuda maintains a defence regiment of some 420 soldiers, namely the Royal Bermuda Regiment, which includes a long-term "nucleus" of about 140 soldiers and 30 full-time soldiers, in addition to part-time members. In 2015, the Defence Act was amended to set out that the required number of members for the Regiment should be raised and maintained through voluntary enlistment and that if that was not met, the Governor might either revise the roles and responsibilities of the Regiment to take account of the shortfall or authorize compulsory enlistment to make up the required numbers. While historically the ranks of the Regiment have been raised through conscription by ballot, from 2015 to 2016, the intake was completely volunteer-based, which made it possible for the Regiment to have an all-volunteer recruitment camp two years in a row.

50. The Regiment regularly cooperates with foreign Governments and militaries, including those of Canada, Jamaica and the United States, and assists in disaster relief operations in other territories administered by the United Kingdom.

51. In addition, according to the administering Power, the Royal Bermuda Regiment Boat Troop assists the Bermuda Police Service with inshore maritime patrolling and policing requirements. According to the administering Power, legislation is under preparation to establish a full-time marine boat troop, to be staffed by solders of the Regiment and to allow the Regiment to fully assume such a responsibility.

VII. Relations with international organizations and partners

52. Bermuda is an associate member of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Caribbean Community and the Caribbean Common Market, and a member of the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force, which was set up to combat money-laundering. The Financial Intelligence Agency of Bermuda is a member of the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units, and the Bermuda Monetary Authority is a member of regional and international financial regulatory bodies, including the International Association of Insurance Supervisors, the International Organization of Securities Commissions and the Group of International Finance Centre Supervisors. Bermuda also plays a key role in the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes of OECD as a member of its peer review group. In addition, Bermuda participates in the Sea Turtle Conservancy, the Caribbean-United States Security Cooperation Dialogue, the International Trade Union Confederation, the International Criminal Police Organization and the International Olympic Committee.

53. As a Non-Self-Governing Territory of the United Kingdom, Bermuda is associated with the European Union but is not a part of it. According to the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the United Kingdom and the overseas territories continued their dialogue on the implications for the latter of the decision by the United Kingdom to leave the European Union (known as "Brexit"). In addition, it was indicated that a clear objective of the exit negotiations was to achieve an agreement that worked for all parts of the United Kingdom family, and the United Kingdom affirmed that it would seek to ensure that the security and economic sustainability of the overseas territories was preserved and, where possible, strengthened post-"Brexit". Since January 2014, the Territory has been a partner under the 2013 Overseas Association Decision of the Council of the European Union, which was approved, inter alia, in an effort to move from a classic development cooperation approach to a reciprocal partnership that promotes sustainable development and the values and standards of the European Union worldwide.

VIII. Future status of the Territory

A. Position of the territorial Government

54. Information regarding developments on the future status of Bermuda is reflected in section I above.

B. Position of the administering Power

55. At the 8th meeting of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), on 9 October 2017, during the seventy-second session of the

General Assembly, the representative of the United Kingdom stated that the relationship of the Government of the United Kingdom with its overseas territories was a modern one based on partnership, shared values and the right of the people of each Territory to choose to remain British. He said that the territories were an integral part of global Britain and the United Kingdom's commitment to its territories' security and prosperity remained strong, as demonstrated by the swift and comprehensive response to the devastation wreaked in some territories by Hurricane Irma, and the ongoing recovery efforts.

56. The representative of the United Kingdom went on to say that, the Joint Ministerial Council was the primary forum for high-level political dialogue between the United Kingdom and the overseas territories. As the United Kingdom negotiated to leave the European Union, it was fully committed to taking into account the priorities of the overseas territories, including Gibraltar. The United Kingdom-Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council on European Union negotiations had been established to discuss the priorities of the territories and determine further areas for collective engagement. He added that the fundamental responsibility of the Government of the United Kingdom, under international law and the Charter of the United Nations, was to ensure the security and good governance of the territories and their peoples.

57. In the communiqué adopted at the sixth meeting of the Overseas Territories Joint Ministerial Council, the Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories indicated that the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, as enshrined in the Charter, applied to the peoples of the overseas territories. They reaffirmed the importance of promoting the right of the peoples of the territories to self-determination, a collective responsibility of all parts of the Government of the United Kingdom. They committed themselves to exploring the ways in which the overseas territories could maintain international support in countering hostile sovereignty claims. For those Territories with permanent populations who wished it, the United Kingdom would continue to support their requests for removal from the list of Non-Self-Governing Territories. The Government of the United Kingdom and the leaders of the overseas territories agreed that the fundamental structure of their constitutional relationships had been the right one — powers were devolved to the elected Governments of the territories to the maximum extent possible consistent with the United Kingdom retaining those powers necessary to discharge its sovereign responsibilities. They also agreed upon the need to continue their engagement on those issues to ensure that constitutional arrangements worked and were developed effectively to promote the best interests of the territories and of the United Kingdom.

IX. Action taken by the General Assembly

58. On 7 December 2017, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 72/98, on the basis of the report of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples for 2017 (A/72/23) and the subsequent recommendation by the Fourth Committee. In that resolution, the Assembly:

(a) Reaffirmed the inalienable right of the people of Bermuda to self-determination, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), containing the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples;

(b) Also reaffirmed that, in the process of decolonization of Bermuda, there was no alternative to the principle of self-determination, which was also a fundamental human right, as recognized under the relevant human rights conventions;

(c) Further reaffirmed that it was ultimately for the people of Bermuda to determine freely their future political status in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter, the Declaration and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and in that connection called upon the administering Power, in cooperation with the territorial Government and appropriate bodies of the United Nations system, to develop political education programmes for the Territory in order to foster an awareness among the people of their right to self-determination in conformity with the legitimate political status options, based on the principles clearly defined in Assembly resolution 1541 (XV) and other relevant resolutions and decisions;

(d) Stressed the importance of the 2005 report of the Bermuda Independence Commission, which provided a thorough examination of the facts surrounding independence, and continued to regret that the plans for public meetings and the presentation of a Green Paper to the House of Assembly followed by a White Paper outlining the policy proposals for an independent Bermuda had so far not materialized;

(e) Underlined the need further to strengthen good governance, transparency and accountability in government for the benefit of the Territory;

(f) Welcomed the extension by the administering Power to Bermuda of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in March 2017;

(g) Requested the administering Power to assist the Territory by facilitating its work concerning public educational outreach efforts, consistent with Article 73 *b* of the Charter, and in that regard called upon the relevant United Nations organizations to provide assistance to the Territory, if requested;

(h) Welcomed the active participation of Bermuda in the work of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

(i) Encouraged the Territory to continue to participate in the activities of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, including regional seminars;

(j) Stressed the importance of the Special Committee being apprised of the views and wishes of the people of Bermuda and enhancing its understanding of their conditions, including the nature and scope of the existing political and constitutional arrangements between Bermuda and the administering Power;

(k) Called upon the administering Power to participate in and cooperate fully with the work of the Special Committee in order to implement the provisions of Article 73 *e* of the Charter and the Declaration and in order to advise the Committee on the implementation of the provisions under Article 73 *b* of the Charter on efforts to promote self-government in Bermuda, and encouraged the administering Power to facilitate visiting and special missions to the Territory;

(l) Reaffirmed the responsibility of the administering Power under the Charter to promote the economic and social development and preserve the cultural identity of the Territory, and requested the administering Power to take steps to enlist

and make effective use of all possible assistance, on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis, in the strengthening of the economy of the Territory;

(m) Took into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals, stressed the importance of fostering the economic and social sustainable development of the Territory by promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supported, inter alia, economic, social and human development, while facilitating ecosystem conservation, regeneration, restoration and resilience in the face of new and emerging challenges, and strongly urged the administering Power to refrain from undertaking any kind of illicit, harmful and unproductive activities, including the use of the Territory as a tax haven, that were not aligned with the interest of the people of the Territory;

(n) Requested the Territory and the administering Power to take all measures necessary to protect and conserve the environment of the Territory against any degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to monitor environmental conditions in the Territory and to provide assistance to the Territory, consistent with their prevailing rules of procedure;

(o) Requested the Special Committee to continue to examine the question of Bermuda and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session and on the implementation of the present resolution.

Annex

Map of Bermuda